
Budgets and Criteria for Additional Funds 2021/22

Report being considered by: Schools Forum on 19th October 2020

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Item for: Decision **By:** All Forum Members

1. Purpose of the Report

To set out the proposed budgets for additional funds for 2021/22 and to agree the criteria for accessing these funds to go out to consultation with all schools.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Agree the proposed budgets for additional funds for 2021/22.
- 2.2 Agree the criteria for additional funds to go out to consultation with all schools.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council or the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 School funding regulations allow for a few exceptional circumstances to be funded outside the formula and be top sliced from the DSG.
 - (a) Growth funding is within the Local Authorities' Schools Block DSG allocations but is not distributed via the formula. The growth fund supports growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need; supports additional classes needed to meet infant class size regulation; and meets the costs of new schools.
 - (b) Funding for schools in financial difficulty where a school phase has agreed to de-delegate this funding (primary phase only in West Berkshire). There needs to be agreed criteria on how this funding is to be determined and allocated to schools.
 - (c) Funding can be used from the high needs block to allocate additional funding to schools which have a disproportionate number of high needs pupils. This has to be determined by a formulaic method.
 - (d) A falling rolls fund may be set aside from schools block funding, and used where a school has surplus places and faces a funding shortfall but an increase in pupils in the near future is expected.
- 3.2 For each fund the Schools' Forum need to agree clear criteria setting out the circumstances in which payments could be made. These should provide a transparent and consistent basis (with differences permitted between phases) for the allocation of the funding.

- 3.3 In 2018/19 the Schools Forum agreed to cease the Falling Rolls fund because only one school in four years had qualified for a payment. Funds are held for each of the other three circumstances. These now need to be reviewed and amended where appropriate. The forthcoming school funding consultation will invite views from schools.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 To agree the budget for each fund. Previous year's budgets and actual are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1	Growth Fund	Primary Schools in Financial difficulty	Additional High Needs Funding
2017/18 Budget Set	162,000	119,980	100,000
2017/18 Actual Spend	126,287	55,551	100,972
2018/19 Budget Set	280,710	379,120	100,000
2018/19 Actual Spend	87,500	127,073	83,609
2019/20 Budget Set	655,800	252,047	100,000
2019/20 Actual Spend	183,048	70,880	68,001
2020/21 Budget Set	756,100	200,000	100,000

- (a) Growth funding is within local authorities' schools block DSG allocations. It is calculated based on the growth in pupil numbers between the October 2019 and October 2020 census. The 2020/21 growth fund allocation for WBC was £756k, which included funding for the new primary school Highwood Copse which was expected to open in September 2020. We have not yet received the 2021/22 allocation. The recommendation within this report is to set the growth fund budget for 2021/22 at the level awarded by the DfE. Any over or under spend at year end would form part of the DSG balances.
- (b) The primary schools in financial difficulty fund was topped up by £19k to £200k for 2020/21 budget purposes. Bids amounting to £27,500 have been approved in 2020/21 so far, therefore a decision needs to be made to de-delegate this service in 2020/21, in order to top up the fund to £200k.
- (c) It is apparent that the number of schools with a disproportionate number of high needs pupils is continuing to grow, and funding needs to be set aside from the high needs block at the current level of spend, in order to fund those schools qualifying. It is proposed that this remains at £100k.
- 4.2 To agree the proposed criteria for the Growth Fund, Financial Difficulty Fund and Additional High Needs Fund in order for them to go out to consultation with Schools. The criteria for each fund are included in appendices B, C and D to the Schools Funding Consultation.